

# Connections

Celebrating Programs Through Partnerships  
Fall 2002

City of Seattle  
Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor



SEATTLE PARKS  
AND RECREATION

## From the Superintendent

### Standards of Excellence

**Editor's Note:** As *Connections* went to press, the City Council passed the City's 2003-04 budget. For a summary of changes to the Department's budget, please visit [www.cityofseattle.net/park](http://www.cityofseattle.net/park) or call (206) 684-8020.

For much of the year, a committee led by Margaret Anthony has been working on ways to help community center coordinators and advisory councils improve recruitment, training, communications, role definition and financial operations. The committee, including Parks staff and Bill Keller, concluded that establishing clear standards and expectations for all coordinators, ARC, and advisory council members was a necessary first step in making these improvements.

The committee did an excellent job of putting together a "Baseline Standards Checklist" for staff and councils to guide us in meeting basic business goals of our partnership. We hope that the checklist will be a helpful tool for staff and volunteers when they have questions about operations and roles and responsibilities. In mid-November we will train our coordinators on the Baseline Standards Checklist. The coordinators will then share it with advisory council members at January meetings. Please call Margaret, (206) 684-7085, or Bill, (206) 684-7083, with any questions.

I did want to extend my deepest sympathies to the families and friends of Fabiola Woods and Roger Peter, two beloved members of the parks and recreation family (see letter from Jackie Ramels). We will miss them both.

In addition, I would like to thank the advisory councils, and ARC for the ARC Opportunity Fund (see article below). These grant awards will truly make a difference.

— Ken Bounds, Superintendent

### Health Is a Laughing Matter

If you've been hearing a surfeit of chuckles and guffaws on Tuesday afternoons at Queen Anne Community Center, it may be the sound of people improving their health.

The Laughter Club is a free drop-in program for senior adults that promotes the therapeutic benefits of laughing out loud. The 15 participants, some of them recovering from illness, and others just looking for a mental outlet, take part in the laughter exercise workout and other activities that encourage playfulness, fun, and mental balance. The group leader demonstrates up to a dozen different kinds of laughs—the roller coaster laugh and ice-down-the-back-of-your-shirt laugh are two examples—and club members imitate these and feed off each other. The club is run by volunteers trained in laughter therapy through the World Laughter Tour and supported by the Senior Adult Advisory Council and the Queen Anne Advisory Council.

Among the possible benefits of laughter:

- Improvements to immune function
- Internal "massage" from vibrating muscles
- Stress relief through discharge of tension

For more information about the Laughter Club, please call Tim Pretare at (206) 684-4240.

## From the Prez

### Fabiola Woods: Committed, caring crusader

I am sorry to report that ARC Board member Fabiola Woods died on October 29 after an extended illness. The board, and the city, lost a tireless advocate for equity, access, decency and improvement. She was a true warrior, representing all that is good in the human spirit, and was afraid of nothing. Fabiola had a long history of community activism in Seattle, including winning the Jefferson Award in 1991. When I met her seven or eight years ago, she was a member of the Van Asselt Advisory Council, involved in the drive to improve the advisory council system. (Some of you may remember that adventure, which resulted in Programs Through Partnerships.) Before she joined the board, she often came to ARC meetings, and told us exactly what we needed to do to improve the board. She was eventually appointed to the ARC committee writing the code of ethics. Vigilantly committed to doing the right thing, she was precisely the right person to help in that endeavor. Later, as an ARC board member, she reminded us often that our mission is to support programming and to provide opportunities for all children in Seattle. Fabiola's personality was larger than life, and her death leaves a gaping hole on the board. I will miss her tremendously.

I would also like to extend sympathy to the colleagues, friends and family of Roger Peter, coordinator of Montlake Community Center, who died on October 25. I have heard that the Montlake Advisory Council made great strides under his kind and gentle guidance.

The Baseline Standards Checklist mentioned in Ken Bounds's letter will help ensure the vitality of all the advisory councils. The most significant points for advisory councils are that you must have a set of bylaws, annual election of officers, a minimum of seven active members, a minimum of six meetings a year, and you must meet at least eight times a year. The standards are ready to be rolled out at the beginning of 2003, and I would like to emphasize that the ARC board is committed to helping individual advisory councils achieve these goals.

You may have also heard about the ARC Opportunity Fund (see article below). Having an additional source of funds is especially important as Parks is subjected to increasingly severe budget cuts.

The next ARC board meeting will be held at Garfield Community Center on December at 7 p.m. Our annual meeting is scheduled for February 2003. Five positions will be up for election at that time, and I hope many of you will consider running for election. We need vital and committed people to serve on the board and lead us into the future as we anticipate increased growth and ever more opportunities.

Best season wishes to everyone.

— Jackie Ramels, ARC Board President

## MODEL PARTNERSHIPS

### ARC Opportunity Fund

The Associated Recreation Council last month awarded \$83,327 in one-year grants to 11 community center advisory councils as part of its newly established Advisory Council Opportunity Fund. Funded by contributions from member advisory councils, the Opportunity Fund is designed to promote quality recreation programming. The grants will fund computer literacy classes, computer labs, junior naturalist training, summer program, cultural programs, service learning opportunities and an after-school enrichment program.

The awards, which ARC distributed on Oct. 31, are:

- \$10,000 to the Delridge Advisory Council to support its Community Tech Lab, which will provide programs in basic computer literacy for children aged 5-12, Internet usage for teens 13-18, and fundamentals of computing for adults.
- \$10,000 to the Garfield Teen Life Center to support its Community Tech Lab, which teaches classes to teens on entry-level software and multimedia.
- \$10,000 to the Garfield Community Center to fund a Lab Coordinator position for 28 weeks (from March to October 2003) for its Community Tech Lab.
- \$10,000 to the Rainier Community Center to support Junior Naturalist training at five community centers, and additional teen programming at 10 centers to support environmental stewardship activities summer day camps in 2003.
- \$10,000 to the Rainier Beach Community Center to support a Lab Coordinator position for the Community Tech Lab, which will keep it open for basic computer literacy classes and drop-in access for all ages.
- \$10,000 to the Yesler Community Center for next summer's programs, including support for a summer day camp that will accommodate 45 youth aged 5-12, and for a drop-in playground program.
- \$9,584 to the Van Asselt Community Center to support a building monitor that will support keeping the Community Center open during morning hours (9 a.m. to 1 p.m.) in 2003 to accommodate senior programs and pickleball.
- \$5,000 to support new cultural programming at the Japanese Garden, including tea ceremonies, music, dance, theater and supplies.
- \$4,743 for South Park Community Center's Helping Hands/Hearts Program, which provides service learning opportunities for 34 teens, a stipend of \$100 for 50 hours of service learning, and supports after school care, coaching, camp counselors, and a computer lab assistant.
- \$3,000 to the Loyal Heights Community Center's Homework/Tech program - Kidzone. The funds will provide two Gateway computers, educational software, and color printers for homework for kids in kindergarten through 5th grade.
- \$1,000 for the Ballard Community Center's Before & After School enrichment program, to buy books, art supplies, board games, musical instruments, Legos and software games.

Questions? Contact Bill Keller at (206) 684-7083 or [bill.keller@seattle.gov](mailto:bill.keller@seattle.gov)



### Rainier Beach Pool Program Helps Arthritis Sufferers

By Miya Cheng

When Alex Souldancer discovered the Arthritis Foundation was developing a water exercise program at Rainier Beach Pool designed for individuals with movement limitations, she was hesitant at first.

"I was so used to exercising on land, but then I had to give it up when I discovered that you can do a wide range of things in the water," said Souldancer who is now one of the program's instructors at the Rainier Beach Pool and who is also living with arthritis. "It saved my life."

The Arthritis Foundation and the YMCA developed the aquatic exercise program years ago. Seattle Parks and Recreation began its water exercise program at Rainier Beach Pool in 1998. Instructors trained by Arthritis Foundation teach the class. The Arthritis Foundation helps promote the program through local doctors' offices and clinics. Participants must have a doctor's referral. The program offers drop-in classes (no registration necessary) that run an hour long. The cost is \$2.25 per class.

The program's exercises are conducted in the deepest part of the pool's shallow end while music plays. The warm water and gentle movements help to relieve pain and stiffness. The water supplies mild resistance, which helps the participants to develop strength, endurance and flexibility.

The program can also help lift spirits. "I've had major depression with age and disease," said Souldancer. Interacting with others who are experiencing the same thing has helped her to deal with depression, said Souldancer, who has had two hip replacements and a knee replacement. "And there's no excuse for not doing it!"

Corey Myers, Assistant Aquatics Center Coordinator at Rainier Beach Pool, said people with arthritis are less mobile, often homebound, and depressed. She said the program is designed to improve the overall quality of

life by working to improve joint flexibility, range of motion, reaching, bending, balancing and rotating. In working to improve physical limitations, the program also helps to build teamwork, trust, self-esteem and friendships said Myers. "It helps people feel like they are a part of society."

For more information about the training or about water exercise classes, please call the Rainier Beach Pool at (206) 386-1944.

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#### Credits

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